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PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

IN RE

APPLICATION OF: Akihiro Shimotsu

SERIAL NO.: 09/771,273

FILED: January 26, 2001

FOR: FERRULE FOR AN OPTICAL FIBER
AND MANUFACTURING METHOD
THEREOF

EXAMINER: J. Doan

ART UNIT: 2874

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.: A0-234 US

Assistant Commissioner of Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

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RESPONSE

In response to the Office Action of May 17, 2002, Applicant has the following comments:

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

In the Office Action of May 17, 2002, claims 1-9 were pending in the application. Claims 5 and 9 were indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 1-4 and 6-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Takahashi. Those rejections are respectfully but emphatically traversed.

First of all, the rewriting of allowable dependent claims 5 and 9 will be deferred pending allowance of the remaining claims.

Secondly, paragraph no. 4 of the Office Action rejects claims 1-9 under 35 U.S.C. §103. However, the Office Action Summary and paragraph no. 5 of the Office Action indicates that claims 5 and 9 are allowable but objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Therefore, this response is being made under the assumption that paragraph no. 4 of the Office Action should correctly read that claims 1-4 and 6-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Takahashi 6,341,191.

With that understanding, this new rejection of the claims as being unpatentable over Takahashi is not understood any more than was the rejection of all of the claims in view of the Yamane reference in the first Office Action of December 17, 2001.

Specifically, in Applicant's Remarks to the first Office Action, it was pointed out that the teachings of Yamane are completely different from Applicant's disclosed and claimed invention. It was pointed out that ferrule holder 72 of Yamane is formed of metal and ferrule 72 is press-fitted into the ferrule holder. In other words, Applicant's disclosed and claimed invention calls for a flange (ferrule holder) to be overmolded about a capillary (ferrule), whereas Yamane specifically teaches a pre-formed ferrule holder press-fit onto a ferrule.

In response to Applicant's Remarks to the first Office Action, the Examiner now has withdrawn the rejection of the claims in view of the Yamane reference and has presented a new grounds of rejection applying the Takahashi reference. This is not at all understood. The teachings of Takahashi are exactly the same as the teachings of Yamane and, again, are completely different from Applicant's disclosed and claimed invention.

Specifically, Takahashi states in column 5, lines 66-67, that flanges 14 and 15 are press-fitted to the outside diameter surfaces of the respective ferrules 8 and 9. In other words, Takahashi, like Yamane, specifically teaches a press-fitting concept and does not show nor even remotely suggest the overmolding concept of Applicant's disclosed and claimed invention.

The Examiner states that Takahashi discloses "a flange (14) molded on a capillary surface". That is not true! As stated above, Takahashi specifically teaches that flange 14 is press-fitted onto the ferrule and is not molded thereon.

In support of the above statement, the Examiner cites column 3, line 22, of Takahashi. However, column 3, line 22 of Takahashi states: "In a further preferred form, one or both of the optical fibers supported by the fixed ferrule and the rotating ferrule may be an attenuation optical fiber or fibers." What does this passage from Takahashi have to do with anything at issue herein? Whether or not one or both of the optical fibers may be attenuation fibers has nothing whatsoever to do with overmolding a flange about a capillary or ferrule!

The bottom line is that the new Takahashi reference contains the same teachings as the original Yamane reference of press-fitting a flange onto a ferrule. Neither of these references even remotely suggest Applicant's unique concept of overmolding a flange about a capillary or ferrule. Like the Yamane reference, the Takahashi reference should be withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of application, allowance of claims 1-4 and 6-8, along with previously allowed claims 5 and 9, and passing the application to issue are respectfully requested.

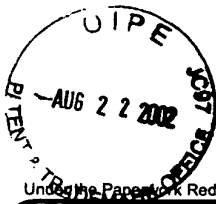
Respectfully submitted,
MOLEX INCORPORATED

Date: August 8, 2002

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